

LOUISIANA WILD LIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

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P R O C E E D I N G S

BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, July 12, 1977

10:00 o'clock a.m.

DOYLE G. BERRY
Chairman

Municipal Auditorium
Morgan City, Louisiana



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P R O C E E D I N G S

. . . . The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission convened on Tuesday, July 12, 1977, at 10:00 o'clock a.m. in the Municipal Auditorium, Morgan City, Louisiana, Doyle G. Berry, Chairman, presiding.

PRESENT WERE:

DOYLE G. BERRY, Chairman
DONALD F. WILLE, Vice Chairman
MARC DUPUY, JR., Member
J. C. GILBERT, Member
JERRY JONES, Member
JEAN LAPEYRE, Member
HARVEY CLAY LUTTRELL, Member
J. BURTON ANGELLE, Director.

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A G E N D A

1. Approval of minutes of June 21, 1977. (6)

DR. LYLE ST. AMANT

2. Mississippi River Materials, Inc. has (7)
requested renewal of permit to remove



sand and/or fill material from the Mississippi River in vicinity of Mile 71.0 between 70.26 AHP and Mile 71.57 AHP which expires July 30, 1977.

3. Lambert Gravel Company, Inc. has requested a permit to remove gravel from the Mississippi River and Profit Island Chute, Profit Island, Louisiana. (8)
4. Atlas Construction Company, Inc. has requested a permit to remove fill material from the Mississippi River, Left Side at Levee Station 2000+00 at Nero, Plaquemine Parish, Louisiana. (10)

MR. HARRY SCHAFER

5. Setting of seasons on oyster seed grounds and reservations. (11)

MR. KENNETH SMITH

6. Discussion of proposed rules and regulations relative to Lake Bistineau. (16)

MR. TED O'NEIL

7. Discussion of bag limit on raccoons. (22)

MR. ALLAN ENSMINGER

8. Set dates for 1977 alligator season. (46)



MR. RICHARD YANCEY

- 9. A report and discussion of Atchafalaya Delta Wildlife Management Area. (70)
- 10. Right of way, Red River Wildlife Management Area. (100)
- 11. Establish tentative dates of hunting season on migratory birds including doves, snipe, rails, gallinules, woodcock and teal. (106)

MR. JOE HERRING

- 12. Jackson-Bienville daily permit for duck season. (116)
- 13. Description errors in hunting season regulations. (117)

OTHER BUSINESS

- 14. Mineral prices on Rockefeller Refuge. (120)
- 15. Set date for August meeting. (124)
- Greetings and recognition of visitors. (5)
- Discussion of predatory night hunting. (124)
- Suggestion re bank fishing. (125)



CHAIRMAN DOYLE G. BERRY: Good morning. We are glad to be here this morning in Morgan City. On behalf of myself and the Commission I want to thank the Stevenses and others who helped them, who took care of the Commission last night, took them on a little boat ride up the river and down to Bayou Teche and fed them pretty well.

Also I would like to recognize Mr. Ed Kyle who is here this morning, who is a former Board member and former Chairman. Mr. Kyle, come out from behind the concrete back there, behind the brick. I have been trying for five years to straighten out his mess after I relieved him after he went off the Commission, and I am about to get it straightened out!

Burt, have we overlooked anybody this morning, other than the press who is here from out of town?

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: I see Mr. Bernard, who is president of the Wildlife Federation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Glad to have you with us, Mr. Bernard.

I am glad to see some local participation.



We had a meeting here last year, which was the first meeting ever held in Morgan City, and we had about I guess 15 or 20 people from the outside who came in. I have told all my friends around Morgan City to come here today and be heard or forever hold your peace, because I don't want to listen to and answer all these questions that you can ask these intelligent biologists and the Director. They can give you the right questions and answers and you still won't understand them when they get through, but at least they have answered you.

The first item on the agenda this morning is the approval of the minutes of the meeting of June 21. I would like to have a motion.

MR. LUTTRELL: I so move.

MR. WILLE: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: Moved by Mr. Luttrell, seconded by Mr. Wille. All in favor say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?

(No response)

Hearing none, so ordered.

Dr. St. Amant.



DR. LYLE ST. AMANT: Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission, we have three items today. The first one is a request for renewal of an existing permit by Mississippi River Materials, Inc. to remove sand and/or fill materials from the Mississippi River in the vicinity of Mile 71. This permit has been in effect and they have operated properly. They meet all the requirements set forth by the Commission and I would recommend that it be extended for one year at five cents a cubic yard.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, you have heard the recommendation.

MR. WILLE: I so move.

MR. JONES: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: Moved by Mr. Wille and seconded by Mr. Jones. All in favor say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?

(No response)

So ordered.

(The full text of the resolution is here made



a part of the record.)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Wild Life and Fisheries does hereby grant permission to MISSISSIPPI RIVER MATERIALS, INC. to remove sand and/or fill material from the Mississippi River in the vicinity of Mile 71.0 AHP between Mile 70.26 AHP and Mile 71.57 AHP, for a period of one year from July 30, 1977 to July 30, 1978, at a royalty of five cents per cubic yard.

DR. ST. AMANT: The second item is a request by Lambert Gravel Company, Inc. to dredge in the vicinity of Profit Island Chute in the Mississippi River. They held a permit in this area and they did not exercise it. It expires and they are reapplying for a new permit. They have met the requirements set forth by the Commission and I would recommend they be issued a permit for one year at five cents for sand and fill material and the appropriate royalty if they do dredge any gravel.



MR. DUPUY: I so move.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have a motion by Mr. Dupuy. Do I hear a second?

MR. LUTTRELL: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: Seconded by Mr. Luttrell. All in favor say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?

(No response)

So ordered.

(The full text of the resolution is here made a part of the record.)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Wild Life and Fisheries does hereby grant permission to the LAMBERT GRAVEL COMPANY, INC. to remove gravel from the Mississippi River and Profit Island Chute, Profit Island, Louisiana, for a period of one year from July 22, 1977 to July 22, 1978.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Dr. St. Amant.



DR. ST. AMANT: I have one more, Mr. Chairman. The last one is by Atlas Construction Company. They request a permit to remove fill material from the Mississippi River, left side, at Levee Station 2000, at Nero, Plaquemines Parish. The permit meets the requirements set forth by the Commission and I would recommend it be issued for a period of one year at five cents.

MR. WILLE: Move.

MR. LAPEYRE: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: Moved by Mr. Wille and seconded by Mr. Lapeyre. All in favor say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?

(No response)

So ordered.

(The full text of the resolution is here made a part of the record.)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Wild Life and Fisheries does hereby grant permission to remove fill material from



the Mississippi River, left side, at Levee Station 2000+00 at Nero, Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, for a period of one year from July 12, 1977 to July 12, 1978, at a royalty rate of five cents per cubic yard.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Dr. St. Amant. Mr. Schafer.

I might add that Morgan City must be a pretty good place to come to because we rarely ever have all seven board members present, and they are here today.

MR. HARRY SCHAFER: Mr. Chairman, as you know, we have four seed reservations and we try to alternate them, open every other year, so under this authority we would like to open Bay Junop and Hackberry Bay at the regular opening of the oyster season on the state grounds, which will be the first Wednesday after Labor Day, September 7, 1977, and along with this to close or keep Bay Gardene closed and Sister Lake closed and also close the new shell plant, 300 acres in Black Bay. This shell plant is marked off and labeled as a shell



plant and we would like to keep that closed during this coming season.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, you have heard the recommendation.

MR. LUTTRELL: I so move.

MR. JONES: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: Moved by Mr. Luttrell, seconded by Mr. Jones. All in favor say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?

(No response)

So ordered.

MR. SCHAFER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

(The full text of the resolution is here made a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, the natural oyster reefs ("Oyster Seed Grounds") under the managerial supervision of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries must open on the first Wednesday following Labor Day, September 7, 1977, as provided for by Louisiana Law Title 56,



Section 433, and

WHEREAS, "Oyster Seed Reservations" are small portions of the "Oyster Seed Grounds" managed and controlled for seed oyster production which are opened on alternate years, and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries had clam shells deposited in an area commonly referred to as Black Bay to provide cultch material for oyster setting and it will take approximately one year for this plant to materialize,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries does hereby set the Hackberry Bay (DuChene) Oyster Seed Reservation and the Bay Junop Oyster Seed Reservation season beginning one-half (1/2) hour before sunrise on the first Wednesday following Labor Day, September 7, 1977. Said seasons shall remain open with the same regulations



as the regular oyster season; however, the Secretary shall be authorized and empowered to close the two areas if it is deemed necessary by biological investigations and sampling.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 300-acre shell plant marked off in Black Bay will be closed for the 1977-1978 oyster season.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Bay Gardene and Sister Lake Seed Reservations will not be opened to oyster harvest or transplant.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kenneth Smith. I would like to inform the audience at this time that the rest of the Board will probably be out of this conversation because this next item refers to Lake Bistineau which is up in Shreveport, up in Mr. Wille's (Commission Member) hometown and we will let him and Mr. Smith take all the credit for whatever they do up there.

Yes, Mr. Lapeyre.

MR. LAPEYRE: I would like to call Harry



Schafer back and get a figure on acreage of the areas that are going to be closed, the seed areas. Do you have that figure, Harry?

MR. SCHAFFER: The areas of Sister Lake and Bay Gardene? I do not have those acres with me.

DR. ST. AMANT: I can give you them approximately.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right, Doc.

DR. ST. AMANT: Sister Lake has got 26,000 acres but the productive area is not near that much, and Bay Gardene about 1,500 acres.

MR. LAPEYRE: The productive area of Sister Lake?

DR. ST. AMANT: These areas have been in effect for years and years, set up by the legislature, and they are seed reservations. Sister Lake production went down because of saltwater intrusion but now we are beginning to get fresh water. The areas were opened annually but they just couldn't take the fishing pressure.

MR. SCHAFFER: And Bay Gardene was planted with shell after that '73 flood. We got federal



money from that, and that whole area is now almost an entire seed ground. It has got shells all over the bottom of Bay Gardene.

MR. LAPEYRE: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Schafer.

Mr. Smith, you and Mr. Wille can get on with it now.

MR. KENNETH SMITH: Mr. Chairman, thank you. As you mentioned, this lake is way up in north Louisiana. It is about a 16,000-acre lake and it offers a lot of fishing opportunities to those folks. There are some recent developments I would like to bring to the Commission's attention.

We have looked at the fishing on this lake for some time and we have looked at the number of commercial fishermen that use the lake, we have looked at the effects of the commercial webbing on the striped bass and other game fish and we have also looked at the number of cases made recently on selling game fish.

Now this review brings out this information. The average pound of the best selling non-



predatory gamefish or food fish up there -- we are talking about the buffalo -- is just a little over a half pound per acre, which is extremely low. The next most important fish is the drum, or the "gru," which the locals call, and it is close to four pounds per acre but it hardly will sell in that part of the country.

We also have some carp that doesn't sell too well. The other main category of commercial fish is channel catfish, which is taken primarily by trotlines up there, and we have had only about 1.2 pounds from '70 through '76 but recently we have picked up some 3/4 to 1-pound fish and these are taken in fair numbers now on trotlines.

Now the fisheries man up there, James Brantley, says he has seen only two commercial fishermen on the lake, and he is assigned fulltime to the lake up there.

Another thing concerning Bistineau, in May of '75 we released 450,000 striped bass fingerlings and in '76 we released 188,000 and in '77, the spring of this year, we released 185,000. These fish are already furnishing quite a bit of



fishing opportunity, and the '75 fish are in the five and six-pound category, which are pretty fair size.

Now gill net webbing on Bistineau had been increased. The minimum bar size mesh had been increased to four inches, but these fish, at the rate they are growing, will in a year or less reach the size that they can be taken in this webbing. We have contacted other states with these fisheries that have tried to develop them and they say it is very difficult to do so if you are taking significant numbers in this particular type of commercial gear.

So, we looked a little further and we know that there is probably no direct indication that the use of legal webbing increases the incidence of illegal gear, but this is brought to your attention, that in the five-month period between December 1, 1976 and May 1 of 1977, between 7,000 and 8,000 feet of illegal webbing were confiscated in Bistineau. In this process 11 citations were issued.

The investigation into the sale of game-



fish was then taken in January, February and March of 1977 and this resulted in the arrest of 16 individuals, which we figure only about half of them were actually caught. The gamefish sold were largely crappie, largemouth bass and striped bass, in that order. It is estimated that an individual fishing 100 yards of this webbing in one night could catch 15 or 20 gamefish. This projected over a three-month period would result in between 1,500 and 2,000 pounds of gamefish, which is a fairly significant part of the annual production.

Now, looking at this information, we would to recommend the following, that all netting be prohibited in Bistineau except during special seasons that may be established by the Commission if determined that commercial fishing species are present in sufficient numbers.

We would also like to recommend that this restriction go in effect January 1 of '78. We think this would give the people time to dispose of some of their webbing.

That constitutes my recommendation, Mr. Chairman.



THE CHAIRMAN: You said a while ago they had been confiscating some webbing and netting up there, Kenneth. What happens to that webbing when it is confiscated?

MR. SMITH: Most of it is illegal, can't be used. We may use some of it in our operations but most of it is just taken and we still have it up there. It is not usable to anybody and we can't give it back to them because it is not legal. See, even in the rest of the state it is illegal to fish that size webbing.

MR. LUTTRELL: Did I understand you to feel that the benefits to the state from the sport fishing in that area would exceed the benefits to the state from commercial fishing?

MR. SMITH: Yes, sir, Mr. Luttrell. Where there is a commercial fishery in Louisiana, and there is quite a bit of commercial fisheries exist in the state, we strongly recommend that this fishery continue to exist, but some of these shallow water impoundments, we find that the commercial fishery is simply not there and that the gamefish are and that they are simply taking the



gamefish and not commercial fish, so we think it is in the total best interest of the lake up there to adopt this regulation.

MR. WILLE: Kenneth, in view of your recommendation, I am going to make a motion that we do close the netting on Bistineau, effective January 1.

MR. LUTTRELL: I second the motion.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there any discussion?

(No response)

THE CHAIRMAN: All in favor say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?

(No response)

THE CHAIRMAN: So ordered.

Thank you, Kenneth. You can always tell Mr. Wille did that.

(The full text of the resolution is here made a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, recent population samples conducted on Lake Bistineau indicate very low populations of



commercially valuable fish which are normally taken in nets; and

WHEREAS, only two commercial fishermen could be located who make a portion of their living on Lake Bistineau; and

WHEREAS, the future use of nets poses a threat to the developing striped bass fishery which was initiated in the lake in 1975,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries does hereby close Lake Bistineau to all commercial webbing except for special seasons which may be set at some time in the future if it is determined commercial fish occur in fishable numbers. This closure is to become effective January 1, 1978.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ted O'Neil.

MR. TED O'NEIL: Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Commission, you probably know over the period of years our raccoon hasn't had very much



protection under the present law, the law that they did have, and even at that, our coon population has been able to protect itself some kind of way and last year it was worth \$3.3 million to us and we caught 200-and-some-thousand coons. It was a very great asset to the commercial trapper.

We did set out to pass some sort of legislation that would protect the coon and last year, this past session, a bill was passed and it was participated in by our personnel who worked very hard on it, and we have come up with a bill that would give us the right to set a bag limit on the coon for the coon hunter.

Of course, it is my recommendation that we protect the commercial coon trapper as much as possible and also give the dog man, the dog lover, and the coon hunter the protection that apparently he wanted -- they worked with us -- and so I am going to recommend that we set a bag limit of not more than two coons per hunter and possibly one. It is up to the Commission to decide on this. That is my recommendation.

MR. JONES: Do we have to set the season



or is it set by statute?

MR. O'NEIL: No, it is up to the Commission to set a season and a bag limit. The season is set by statute.

MR. JONES: What is that season?

MR. O'NEIL: It is open.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are there any coon hunters in the audience that wish to be heard at this time? Come forward, sir, and state your name and who you represent, please.

MR. DENIS DePRIEST: My name is Denis DePriest. I am from Morgan City. I represent myself as a coon hunter, and I have spoken to some of the coon hunters around the state and we are in favor of one coon limit. Now we feel that the legislation that came about was not really to protect the coon but to try to get some outlaws from hunting deer and things like that at night.

We just feel like if legislation and the Wild Life and Fisheries will take care of the laws that are on the books and really enforce them, we will -- I get nervous -- anyway, we feel like there are a lot of things that can be done to



protect the coon, like some of the hardwood forests that are being destroyed right now, and any help that we can get will be appreciated. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, sir.

MR. JONES: What do you do with the coon when you kill it?

THE CHAIRMAN: Be careful, that might be a loaded question!

MR. JONES: The average coon hunter, what does he do, outside the trapping season, after the trapping season is over? What do you do?

MR. DePRIEST: I would say the average coon hunter takes the hide and sells it. It helps him pay for some dog food and what-not. In my case, and I can't speak for everybody else, but I eat coon and I have friends that eat coon and I dispose of them that way.

MR. JONES: What I am talking about, though, is outside of the time when the trapping season is over. The law says you can't possess the hide so normally you have got to throw the hide away, right?

MR. DePRIEST: Well, the way the law



stands now, a fellow can go out and kill him a coon if he wants to eat one. Now I would say that 90 percent of the coon hunters in this state are not out to kill coons. We are trying to -- man, we don't have any coons left, so it is a question of going out and running your dogs and looking up at a coon and going on to the next tree.

I would like to see some of the game management areas in the state open for competition hunting where there is no coons taken. Now if any of you fellows have ever been to a competition hunt, you know that it is just a question of going out and running your dogs and looking up at the coon and that's it. Right here in this area it is not a coon hunting area. I guess in a 50-mile radius of here, there is only about seven or eight coon hunters. But we are trying to protect the coons and we see all the time guys riding down the bayou, shooting 8, 10, 12 coons out of the trees, and that doesn't help us any. So we want to see the coons protected. We don't want these laws to hurt us and by the same time not be enforced and these same outlaws going out and still killing



15 or 20 coons. In some cases -- I don't know if it was idle talk -- one guy down in Franklin in an air boat ran down 58 coons in one night. That is the kind of stuff we want to see eliminated.

THE CHAIRMAN: So do we, Mr. DePriest.

MR. LAPEYRE: Mr. Chairman, at the informal meeting yesterday we discussed a limit of four coons. It struck me -- I am not a coon hunter myself -- since the problem appears to be stopping the practice of taking 20 to 50 coons, if you put a limit of four, it seems like you would be taking a substantial step forward. Would that be a reasonable statement?

MR. DePRIEST: No, sir. If you put a limit of four, you wouldn't be taking a substantial step forward, because if you got four hunters on a hunt, that's a lot of coons. If you placed a limit of one coon per hunter on that party, then you have done something. Because the man with the dog doesn't need -- he doesn't go out there to kill those coons; he goes out to listen to his dogs run.

MR. LAPEYRE: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. DePriest, just a



minute. I think Mr. Dupuy wants to ask you a question.

MR. DUPUY: I want to ask a question more particularly of Mr. O'Neil. Ted, would you mind coming back? Since the present law allows or provides no limit during the trapping season and no limit for the sport hunter except for the fact he cannot pelt his coon hide and keep it and sell it during the trapping season, really the intent of the law is to prevent some of these excess kills by boat and by moving vehicles, more so than it is to limit the individual hunter to a certain number of coons. What would be the impact on the coon population if individual hunters had a, let's say, one or two per man or four per night per party. I don't know exactly how we would limit that, but what would be the impact on the population of the coons insofar as the hunting is concerned?

MR. O'NEIL: Mr. Dupuy, as you stated your question, there were two or three parts before you got to the impact --

THE CHAIRMAN: Typical lawyer!



MR. O'NEIL: I will have to tell you that we can't prove today what the impact has had with the past law which we had, which was almost nothing. We can't prove exactly what effect it has had on the total coon population statewide because our catch has increased, but that had to do with five rainy years where all the young were raising and building up. It had to do with extremely good price last year and the effort was there, and it had to do also with a whole lot of the violators killing a whole lot of coons before the open trapping season, keeping the hides in the deepfreeze, which were really some ruinous hides for the fur trade. They were terrible, a lot of them.

So, I think we should think in terms of what the dog man is trying to do, and I think what we have done and what the gentleman before me said. I believe he is real sincere on that, and I think we should consider trying a one coon, if that is what they want.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does anyone else in the audience have any comments or statements they wish



to make? Dick.

Mr. Yancey, before you speak, I might read a telegram this morning received by the Director, Mr. Angelle:

"Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission,

"Municipal Auditorium,

"Morgan City,

"In anticipation of House Bill 257 being signed into law, the Northeast Louisiana Coon Hunters Association in conjunction with Louisiana State Coon Hunters Association supports the one raccoon per person bag limit outside the regular trapping season.

"Signed, Larry DeVille, Northeast Louisiana Coon Hunters Association, and Albert Cross, President, Louisiana State Coon Hunters Association."

MR. YANCEY: O. K., Mr. Chairman, I would just like to make a couple of points here to clear up just what the new law actually does.

First of all, it will not go into effect until September 10 and the changes that the new



law makes in the present law have to do with three aspects of hunting raccoons.

Number one, it means that the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission will set a bag limit on raccoons that will apply outside the trapping season. Now this bag limit will not apply to sport raccoon hunting during the trapping season, which usually runs from about the first of December to the end of February.

Secondly, the new law will prohibit the hunting of raccoons out of boats or vehicles. As this gentleman just pointed out, hunting raccoons out of boats has been practiced extensively in certain parts of the state where you have bayous that traverse these bottomland hardwood areas and marshes, and so with a bag limit, that is going to mean that these people will not be able legally to go out and take large numbers of raccoons from a boat.

So the new law actually makes two changes in the present law. Number one, you will be sport-hunting raccoons under a bag limit outside the trapping season, and second, it will be illegal to



hunt these animals from a boat or vehicle, which is going to provide a considerable measure of additional protection for the animal. That is the only changes the new law makes, so I think we were getting confused on a couple of those points.

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: And provides for the Commission to set a bag limit outside the season.

MR. YANCEY: That's right. The Commission must set a bag limit on raccoons for sport hunting outside the trapping season, and this would go into effect on September 10. It would not go into effect tonight or tomorrow or next week. It would be September 10 when it would go into effect.

MR. LUTTRELL: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask Mr. O'Neil a question, if he will come back.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there anybody here who would be against one coon per night?

(No response)

MR. LUTTRELL: Mr. Chairman and Mr. O'Neil --

THE CHAIRMAN: Just one minute, Mr. Luttrell. Did you have something you wanted to



say? Did you want to make a statement or did you want to make a motion?

MR. LUTTRELL: No, I don't want to make a motion. I want to discuss the thing before, I don't think we are ready for a motion. There is a good bit of discussion to go yet.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right.

MR. LUTTRELL: Are you going to recognize this fellow first?

THE CHAIRMAN: I want him to come up while you are talking.

MR. LUTTRELL: All right. I notice that Mr. O'Neil and the gentleman back here and Mr. Yancey keep referring to the sports hunter. There are three categories to be considered. We have a sports hunter and we have a fur hunter who is out there killing those 30 and 40 coons a night, and of course you have your trapper. We don't want to do anything that will cause a reduction of the resource, but in the past you have a tremendous number of people who have been going up and down the waterways and with dogs that were not sports hunters, and they were killing 15, 20 and



30, 40 coons. A law has been passed, as I see it, and I could be entirely wrong, but I would like you to think about this, that attempts to control the total take of the coon.

Now then since the outlaw hunter -- we call him an outlaw but he was not an outlaw hunter -- has been taking 20 and 30 coons at night in a boat and so forth, and you put a limit of one out there, it will help you and it will be sufficient for you as a sportsman, but it will not be sufficient for the man that has been going out and killing coons for the fur. Our Game Division and our Enforcement Division has tried very hard and our Chiefs doing everything in their power -- of course, I noticed you referred to the fact if we would enforce the laws; well, it is just not as easy to enforce those laws as you think it is, any more than it is easy to enforce this 55-mile-an-hour speed limit.

Now, with the new law, if we think this thing out, and we set that limit high enough that maybe those people could pretty well cover expenses and still not take a chance on getting caught and



paying a fine, maybe that would help your problem.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let me say this. I think where you misunderstood Mr. Yancey or I misunderstood his interpretation of the law, it is illegal to sell a coon hide except during the regular trapping season, and these guys who hunt the rest of the year, it is illegal for them to pelt those hides, and that I was trying to tell Mr. DePriest a while ago, be careful how he answered that thing. I thought that lawyer was trying to trip him up.

MR. DePRIEST: Sir -- what's his name, Luttrell?

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Luttrell. •

MR. DePRIEST: Luttrell, yes. The thing that I see there, it would be the same thing as telling the fellow that he can go out at night and kill as many nutrias as he wants during the trapping season, so to my way of thinking any kind of hunting at night where you are going to kill an animal and take any large numbers of them, it's a waste, so that is the way I feel about it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Davidson, glad to have you back with us. You were here last year



and we are glad to have you again this year.

MR. CLYDE DAVIDSON: I am Clyde Davidson and we represent some of the trappers. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission, it seems to me a little bit ridiculous that you have to kill a coon out of season. They are breeding. We are not against the dogs hunting, but why do they have to kill it? They can hunt their dogs without killing the coon. I see no reason why they should kill it. In the summertime the coons are breeding. There is nothing says that the dog will not run a mother coon with a bunch of little ones, and they go up a tree and they kill it.

Now what do they do with it? They can't eat it. It is just a wasted animal. Why should they have to kill it? We are not against them hunting dogs. We never were, but we are against destroying the animals for absolutely nothing. The fur, the hide is no good. The animal is no good. You kill a male coon, you cannot eat it. If you kill a female with little ones, you still can't eat it. So what use is it to kill it? They tell you that they have to kill the coon to



train the dog. Gentlemen, I have seen many a dog and I have seen many a dog hunt, and I have seen first-class dogs that have never had an animal killed ahead of them. I don't believe it.

We will compromise with the coon hunters. We will have no objection to them hunting dogs but we do have an objection to them killing the coon for absolutely nothing.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let me say this, Mr. Davidson. It has been recommended by the two coon hunters associations in the state and by Mr. DePriest that they be allowed to kill one coon per person, which is about three less than I had really originally thought about and I think most of the Board thought about. Do you think that the commercial trappers would be satisfied to compromise on one coon per person?

MR. DAVIDSON: I am sure we would go along with that, yes, sir.

MR. JONES: How about one per hunting party?

MR. DAVIDSON: Yes, sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: I don't know how you would



really enforce that.

Thank you, Mr. Davidson. Glad to have you back with us this year.

MR. DUPUY: Mr. Chairman, are you ready for a motion?

THE CHAIRMAN: Does anyone else in the audience wish to be heard? Are there any more comments on the coon hunting?

MR. WILLE: The only thing I would like to say is when we get down to this party business, I have kind of got to side with anybody that would say it would be a terrific enforcement problem. From what I have heard, from the recommendations of the different parties that are involved, the coon hunters association, the people that are here, I have got to go with a one-coon limit. That is the way I feel.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will say that Mr. Jones' brother is district attorney down in southwest Louisiana and I am sure is familiar with enforcement problems. Jerry, can you see where that would create any problems going with this party business you are talking about?



MR. JONES: I was just running my mouth over here!

THE CHAIRMAN: You are just saying that!

MR. WILLE: The question was, do you see any problem where if you have a limit on the number of coons in a party.

MR. JONES: Oh, yes, I can see a real problem.

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: Enforcement relative to one per party or one per legal hunter.

MR. JONES: I see no problem with one per legal hunter.

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: But you have a problem with one per party.

MR. JONES: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Chair is ready for a motion.

FROM THE FLOOR: Could I just have a word?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, sir, you sure can. Step forward and state your name and whom you represent, sir.

MR. WAYNE THERIOT: My name is Wayne Theriot and I am a resident of Morgan City. I am



a sportsman and I hunt coons strictly for the meat and the hides are thrown away. I hear the commercial trapper is complaining to deny the sportsmen that spend money for dogs just to hunt for the sport when he traps and no limit and the majority of the money he collects from his hides is not claimed even on his income tax. If they are going to set a limit, why not set one for the trapper, too? It is a shame that a hunter spends money and can't enjoy the sport the year around when a commercial trapper makes money off the hides and throws the meat away and don't even claim it on his income tax.

MR. WILLE: How many coons do you average when you go out hunting?

MR. THERIOT: I kill about -- oh, the most I kill is two, and that is strictly for the meat. I eat them, and the hides are thrown away.

MR. WILLE: You would have an objection then to a one bag limit per person?

MR. THERIOT: No, I don't have no objection. I can eat a coon, me and my family, at my hunting club, but I throw my hides away. What I



am against is the trappers coming in here, trying to deny the one coon they kill, which if you put all the hunters together they kill a hundred coons a year and in the summertime they can't eat, and one trapper will catch more than that during the trapping season. Yet, he destroys the meat and that is what I am against.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Theriot. Anybody else wish to be heard?

MR. DUPUY: Mr. Chairman, I want to make a motion when you finish.

THE CHAIRMAN: Please state your name and who you represent, sir.

MR. CLIFTON AUCOIN: I am Clifton Aucoin. I belong to the same club that Mr. Theriot was just talking about. I am also a parttime commercial trapper. I trap in our hunting lease up there, more or less help watch the outlaws and all, and just about any given night you can go down them canals and there is 10 or 12 so-called coon hunters over my trap with headlights, night after night, with a little blond poodle -- he's pretty well manicured and all. They shoot deer, they shoot



possum, they shoot coons. As a matter of fact, last year I had a \$150 dog I just took out there to try. I left him out there that afternoon and before 12 o'clock that night, across from a man's camp over there, the dog was shot. I took him to the vet, he had a shattered bone in the back leg.

So that coon law the way they have been having it is nothing but a loophole for outlaws in our part of the country. I am not talking for north Louisiana. They may do it right, but our part of the country it is nothing but a loophole for outlaws. I know because I have been there. I have called agents down there. They tell me, "Did you look in that boat? Did you see any mink, otters, anything else?" I said, "No, it would be pretty much of a fool to put all that stuff in this boat and go down the bayou with it." But they are shooting them. During 1973 high water, so-called coon hunters, one of them bragged he killed 19 deer out of our lease back in there. Nineteen deers, he bragged about it three or four years later. I was in there every night, watching the best I could, and I couldn't catch him, and



the agents are not going to catch them either, with the loophole in the laws we been having.

That's all I have to say. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, sir. The truth shall prevail.

MR. DUPUY: Mr. Chairman, in view of the numbers of hunters that we had in Monroe that spoke with regard to coon hunting and the sport of coon hunting and the little bit of discussion we have had here today and the fact that the coon population hasn't be decimated by unlimited numbers of coons being taken by the sport hunter, I feel that a more equitable distribution of the resource would be to allow the sport hunter to kill two per hunter, and I am going to move that outside of the trapping season, during the sport hunting season, that coon hunters be permitted to kill two per person per day.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, you have heard Mr. Dupuy's motion. Do you want to second that?

MR. LUTTRELL: Second the motion.

THE CHAIRMAN: Seconded by Mr. Luttrell. All in favor, say aye.



MR. JONES: I have an amendment I want to make. I move we amend that to one.

THE CHAIRMAN: Substitute motion.

MR. WILLE: I second that.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have a substitute motion made by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Wille. We will vote on the substitute motion first. All in favor of the substitute motion say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?

IN UNISON: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: We will take a hand count.

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: The vote on the substitute motion, one coon versus two.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Jones and Mr. Wille, that's a pair. (Counting) We have got four to two. I am sorry about that, Mr. Dupuy. We are going to have one coon per hunter per day, outside of the regular trapping season.

MR. LUTTRELL: Mr. Chairman, we got "whupped."

THE CHAIRMAN: That's not the first time.

(The full text of the



resolution is here made
a part of the record.)

BE IT RESOLVED that, in
accordance with Act 171 of 1977, the
Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries
Commission does hereby set the bag
limit of one raccoon per legally
licensed person per night in group
hunting of raccoon for sport, except
during the trapping season; that the
taking of raccoons from boats and
motor vehicles is specifically for-
bidden.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that
enforcement of this regulation will
begin September 10, 1977; that all
other basic regulations pertaining to
the hunting of raccoon at night by sport
hunters will remain unchanged.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ensminger.

I want you all to tell Jimmie Thompson
so he will know that we gave him a run for his
money.



MR. ALLAN ENSMINGER: Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Commission, I am sure glad I don't have anything controversial like a coon. We are going to set an alligator season here!

(Laughter)

The only thing I would suggest is that you all call the artist that did this beautiful picture and have him come over here and put two or three more alligators in there.

THE CHAIRMAN: Per picture!

MR. ENSMINGER: The alligator population certainly has responded to the protection the Commission has given them for the past several years. We have been very actively involved in alligator management for some 17 or 18 years. We have seen some very turbulent and controversial times during that period of management and in the face of all the adversities, we have proceeded forward with our management program and have set four alligator seasons in southwest Louisiana since 1972.

These seasons have resulted in probably about a million dollars' worth of income to Cameron, Calcasieu and Vermilion Parishes. At the present



time the American alligator is listed as a threatened species in south Louisiana and as an endangered species north of Highway 190 across Louisiana and is totally delisted in the Parishes of Cameron, Calcasieu and Vermilion.

Under this restriction by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, our Commission has the authority only to set seasons in the area where the animal has been delisted. Now our state, through the Governor's office, has petitioned the Department of the Interior some year and a half ago to reduce the restrictions to the unlisted category in 27 of our coastal parishes. They have not elected to do this and are at the present time reviewing this request and hopefully, by this time next year, we will be able to set a controlled harvest of surplus alligators throughout most of our coastal marshes of Louisiana.

But, as I say, the season now can only be set in Cameron, Calcasieu and Vermilion, and in view of this, I would recommend that the Commission establish an alligator season in those



areas beginning on September 1 and running through the month of September. The reason that we are recommending a little earlier season this year is because of the extremely dry spring that we have experienced has stimulated the females to nest early. We don't think that we will cut into our breeding population of nesting females by having an earlier season, and certainly this will increase the hunter success in the open area.

We have liberalized our hunting quotas and for those people here from the Morgan City area that have anticipated an alligator season in your part of the state in the near future, certainly we would be very happy to explain to you in detail how the seasons and quotas and bag limits are set on alligators in Cameron, Calcasieu and Vermilion. We feel that they work very well. It cuts down on the possibility of illegal killing of alligators and it also gives the landowner very good control over his alligator population. Certainly the landowner is entitled to a good alligator management program because he is the one that has to support this program to continue his



wetland management program.

We will recommend a harvest of about eight percent of the total population in Cameron, Calcasieu and Vermilion. Our aerial inventory we ran this past week indicated a total population of 108,000 alligators, which is a very substantial number of 'gators. Based on an eight percent harvest, this would give us a maximum of approximately 8,000 'gators that could be taken.

During the 1976 season we harvested 4,300 'gators from this same area, which netted about half a million dollars in come. We anticipate that we probably will kill upwards of four to five thousand 'gators in the open area, and certainly the price on 'gator hides is going to be very good again this year. We suspect somewhere in the \$16-\$17 class. We feel that this is an excellent example of wildlife management programs that can be carried on on animals the rest of the country even considers endangered.

THE CHAIRMAN: As I told you yesterday, I think we have 108,000 alligators in Terrebonne and St. Mary Parish. Of course, it's a shame that



we folks in Louisiana, this Commission and biologists and our people are so simpleminded and so stupid and so ignorant and so backward that we have got to go all the way to Washington, D. C., to get a bunch of paid bureaucrats from other parts of the country, half of whom wouldn't know what a damned alligator looks like, to tell us how to hunt our alligators and manage our own resources.

I know that is a little bit off the subject but I think it ought to be said. It is a sad state of affairs when the people in this state can't manage their own business and have got to have a bunch of bureaucrats to run it for them.

MR. ENSMINGER: This is exactly right, Mr. Berry. Not only the American alligator, the people in the mountain areas in Colorado, Wyoming, Montana and Idaho are experiencing the same problems with the grizzly bear problems that they have. The Minnesotans are having extreme problems with the timber wolves. Certainly you can't manage a wildlife species by long distance. You have to be on the ground to do an adequate management program, and certainly we feel like Louisiana's management



on alligators should have been an example for the whole country to have followed with regard to management of species of dwindling numbers and ones that are of commercial value especially.

THE CHAIRMAN: I want to make this comment that I just made in passing for the audience here and perhaps the press will pick it up. Think when you go to send somebody to Washington, send somebody to Congress, and try to pick the man that will let you have some home rule in your own business. I think the states are very capable of running their own business. I think that the wildlife department in each one of these states in the United States is sophisticated enough to certainly know what is going on and certainly they have a better feel for it than the bureaucrats in Washington have. I believe the bureaucrats in Washington have held our alligator season up in this particular part of the country and if they would take the time to come down and go out in the field and see the number of alligators we have out there, not only in St. Mary Parish and eastern Terrebonne but all the way across this



coastline, we certainly would have an alligator season before they are talking about having one.

I would also like to add, and I have said this before and I will say it again, that I think the average alligator is probably worth \$150 to \$200 and in a five-year period -- and if I am wrong in these figures, Allan, you correct me -- an average alligator will destroy something like 1,500 to 2,000 nutrias in a five-year period, not to mention other animals such as deer, duck, fish, whatever. I figure a five-year old alligator is doing at least \$10,000 worth of destruction to wildlife, and yet you kill him and he brings \$200.

MR. ENSMINGER: This is right. Of course, the alligator is an opportunist. He eats anything that gets in the water with him, including little chill'uns and what have you, but certainly the animal eats nutria, mink, raccoon, and anything that comes in contact with that animal in that environment is going to be consumed.

THE CHAIRMAN: They have just about cleaned out our marshes south of here of everything, including the bullfrogs and I will tell you,



as I have said before, it is not the alligator on the threatened list, it is the coonasses that are on the threatened list down here.

MR. DUPUY: Allan, what is the status of the \$500 sport hunting license for non-residents?

MR. ENSMINGER: The legislature passed a bill that permitted the Commission to sell a non-resident alligator hunter license. Up until this time it had been restricted to residents. This bill was passed, establishing a \$500 non-resident hunter fee. We have had quite a number of people inquire as to the possibility of coming to Louisiana and making a trophy hunt on alligators. We suspect that we will have several of these people participate in the season.

They will not be able to hunt unless they have a landowner who will provide them with a tag or a place to hunt, and they have to use one of the landowner's tags that is allocated to them by our quota system. This law will take effect on September 10 and be available September 11 for anyone interested in sport hunting



alligators that are non-residents. It is only in the open area in Cameron, Calcasieu and Vermilion.

MR. DUPUY: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does anybody in the audience wish to make any comments on the alligator season?

MR. LAPEYRE: Just a question. Allan, how many alligators were taken in the season last year?

MR. ENSMINGER: We killed 4,300 'gators in those three parishes and they brought \$509,000, so as you can see it is about \$118 per animal.

MR. LAPEYRE: So you have almost a doubling of last year's take at 8,000; I think you indicated you would take about 8,000.

MR. ENSMINGER: Well, you see, our quota is based on available alligator habitat. If every individual that owned land in the open area applied for the maximum number of tags, we would run slightly over 8,000 tags, but this doesn't occur. Last year we had issued roughly around 5,000 tags, of which about 4,300 were used and 700 or 800 returned to the Commission.



We anticipate that we will have about the same participation this coming year, and roughly 4,000 to 5,000 'gators will be killed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Allan, for the benefit of the audience here, I would like to also comment, and I think I am correct when I say this, that as of today people who catch the alligators are not allowed to sell the meat, to sell any portion of the alligator, the bones or anything else, because the feds haven't yet decided that would be a wholesome, healthy thing for us to do.

MR. ENSMINGER: That's right.

THE CHAIRMAN: They are still trying to decide and they were asked a year ago about it, am I correct, Allan? It will probably be some time next year before they will even tell us whether we will be allowed to sell the meat or eat it or what we can do with it.

Boy, that's a smart bunch up there. I am telling you, it takes them a hell of a long time to make their minds up.

MR. ENSMINGER: Their response was that the endangered species bill provided for the sale



of the skin only. They contended that Louisiana didn't have an adequate law to provide for controlling it. Consequently we went back to the legislature and I think all of you here heard some of the jokes and comments that were made about our alligator parts bill. It was kind of a ridiculous thing and Conway LeBleu summed it up. He said that a lot of the language in that thing was ridiculous and redundant and what-have-you, but it was put in there because the feds required us to say these goofy things in our bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: You mean for goofy people you had to say goofy things!

MR. ENSMINGER: But we ended up passing the bill. We have reapproached them and they indicate that they will now advertise this in the Federal Register but it certainly won't be in time for the upcoming season.

There are some people who estimate that the parts of an alligator, the meat, the curio parts of the head, the feet, toenails and possibly the back skin that has been discarded in past seasons, might even equal the value of the remainder



of the 'gator's hide, so certainly if we can get \$200 instead of \$100 for an alligator that has been killed, we are foolish not to do it.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think Brother Everett wants to be heard a minute. He also believes in the bureaucrats.

MR. EVERETT BERRY: I am Everett Berry. Mr. Chairman, Gentlemen of the Commission, I would like to make a recommendation, if I might. This gentlemen said the feds didn't know what was going on. I think the best way to teach them is to bring them down to see us. I have got a camp and a bunch of people that would help me, and I would like to take them out and let them ride a few alligators. Rather than wait to next year, if some of you Commission members would invite them down, let's take them out.

What do you think about that, Mr. Angelle?

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: Mr. Everett, in talking to your little brother some time ago and after visting with Bob Herps, Assistant Secretary of the Interior, he has committed himself to come down to



south Louisiana and do a little offshore fishing and at the same time I thought we would spend an extra day over at your camp and show him a few 'gators. Bob Herps, who is having the problem with the timber wolf up in Minnesota, feels the same way we do and he is coming down to help us out of our problems, and we will sure take you up on your invitation, Mr. Everett.

MR. EVERETT BERRY: I appreciate that. I think that is the only way those people will learn actually what is going on. They just get what is in the news media and they don't know what is going on.

THE CHAIRMAN: You and Jessie Fontenot have got to remember you can't feed them to the alligators, you just have to show them the alligators.

MR. EVERETT BERRY: Explain to some of my other friends back there, too. Thank you, gentlemen.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Everett.

MR. JONES: I move, we adopt the recommendations.



THE CHAIRMAN: That lawyer is trying to get back to Cameron and get back to work! We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MR. DUPUY: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: All in favor say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?

(No response)

So ordered. The alligator season will be from September 1 to September 30.

(The full text of the resolution is here made a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, Louisiana's efforts to manage the resident population of alligators for the past 17 years have substantially increased the total population, and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Department of Wild Life and Fisheries has, during 1972, 1973, 1975 and 1976, successfully demonstrated that a periodic commercial harvest, based



upon comprehensive population inventories, can be closely controlled, and

WHEREAS, data collected during the 1972, 1973, 1975 and 1976 seasons and from aerial inventory during July, 1977, reflects that the seasons were beneficial in all respects, and

WHEREAS, population levels in Cameron, Vermilion and Calcasieu Parishes now warrant the establishment and continuation of a season in this region of the state, and

WHEREAS, it has been determined from the past four seasons that the system developed for conducting the harvest of animals through a rigidly controlled set of regulations worked out extremely well, and

WHEREAS, no evidence was found that the opening of the four previous seasons encouraged illegal killing of these reptiles, and

WHEREAS, alligators are a



renewable resource and should be managed on a sustained yield basis, thereby providing economic incentive for preserving marshlands,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that another experimental alligator season be hereby established in accordance with the following regulations; no exceptions of these procedures will be permitted, and anyone taking alligators contrary to these regulations will be charged in accordance with the Louisiana Revised Statutes and/or Endangered Species Act of 1972:

1. Open area - Parishes of Calcasieu, Cameron and Vermilion. Coastal marshes including converted marshland. An estimated 108,000 alligators are present in this area outside the refuges. No more than eight percent of this population may be taken during the season.
2. Harvest season - The open season



shall run for a 30-day period beginning on September 1, 1977, and continue through September 30, 1977. Size - no alligators under four feet in length may be taken.

3. Harvest methods - Alligators may be taken only during the daylight hours, between one-half hour before official sunrise to one-half hour after sunset. Special instructions will be issued to the holders of alligator hunter licenses shortly before the opening of the season describing detailed methods regarding the skinning of alligators. Skins processed contrary to the specific requirement of the Commission will be considered illegal. Pole hunting is prohibited to protect nesting female populations.
4. Licenses - An alligator hunter must have a valid commercial alligator hunter license to take, transport



or sell alligators or their skins. The fee for the resident license is \$25.00 per year and for the non-resident \$500.00. These licenses are non-transferable. In order to obtain a resident license, the hunter must have resided in Louisiana for one year preceding the season. He must complete application forms provided by the Commission and furnish proof that he owns the land or has an agreement with the landowner to hunt alligators on the specified property. Information as to the location and acreage of the property must be provided. Applications must be submitted between the dates August 1 and August 31, 1977. The alligator hunter license will be issued only after the hunter has satisfactorily complied with the above requirements. A fur buyer license or fur dealer



license is ~~required for purchasing~~
and handling raw alligator skins in
Louisiana. Persons or firms enter-
ing alligators in interstate commerce
in the course of a commercial activity
must be licensed in accordance with
State and Federal Regulations.

5. Tagging - In addition to a valid
commercial alligator hunting license,
the hunter must also obtain from the
Commission, and have in his possession
while hunting, official tags which
must be firmly attached to each
alligator skin immediately upon
taking. Numbered tags will be issued
to license holders for a sum of \$5.00.
The tags must be attached in the
last six inches of the tail. The
tag must remain attached to the skin
until finally processed by the
fabricator. It shall be illegal
to ~~possess~~ alligator skins in
Louisiana ~~without~~ valid official



tags attached. Official alligator tags will be issued only to alligator hunters, and farmers, and only to those who have authorized applications. The number of tags will be issued on the basis of the area and quality of the habitat, and the rate per acre will be fixed based on extensive population estimates. Tags will be issued for alligator habitat only, based on final decision of the technician. No more than this fixed number of tags will be issued. Each official tag will bear a characteristic number and a duplicate tab, and the tag numbers issued to each hunter will be recorded. Unused tags must be returned to the Commission. Lost or stolen tags will not be replaced, but must be reported. Tags can be used only on the lands applied for and approved on the application.



6. Alligator Farmers and Breeders -

Licensed alligator farmers or breeders will be issued permits to kill and skin their alligators but must follow the same rules and regulations which apply to wild alligators. No alligators on breeding farms may be killed without such a permit. Tagging validation is required on skins taken.

7. Harvest Rates - Maximum of eight

percent of overall population in open season area may be taken.

Tags will be issued on the following basis: Cameron and Calcasieu

Parishes - Brackish Marsh, one per 300 acres; Intermediate Marsh, one per 100 acres; Fresh Marsh, one per 125 acres; Pump-off Districts, regardless of marsh type, one per 500 acres.

Vermilion Parish - Intermediate Marsh, one per 100 acres; Fresh, one per 500 acres; Brackish marsh, one



per 150 acres; Pump-off District,
one per 500 acres.

8. Validation of alligator skins - All alligator skins taken during the experimental alligator season shall be checked and a second tag fixed by personnel of the Louisiana Department of Wild Life and Fisheries at the headquarters of the Rockefeller Refuge on October 3, 4, 5, 1977. The holders of alligator hunting licenses must bring their skins to Rockefeller for validation on one of these three dates between the hours of 8 A.M. and 5 P.M. Special skinning instructions will be verified, and any skins not prepared according to instructions issued in advance of season will be considered illegal. Unused tags will be returned at this time. Validation tags must remain attached to the skin in Louisiana.



9. Shipment - All raw alligator skins shipped out-of-state must bear official shipping tags provided by the Commission. Forms provided must be filled out completely and returned to the Commission within 15 days following the close of the season. No raw alligator skins may be shipped from the state after 60 days following the close of the season without first obtaining a permit from the Commission. Raw alligator skins transported in the course of a commercial activity, shipped or transported within the state must be labeled with tags issued by the Commission describing the number of skins, the consignor, shipping point, consignee and destination. All parts of alligators, other than the raw skins, shipped or transported within or out of the state must be clearly



labeled with the license number of the alligator hunter and the number of the official tag which was attached to the alligator skins.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the administrative responsibility for conducting this season shall rest with J. Burton Angelle, Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Wild Life and Fisheries.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Yancey.

I would like to say this in passing that the comments made a while ago about our biologists, I think that the State of Louisiana is blessed that we have the best biologists of any state in the Union and probably better than most and I think if they headed this group in Washington, it wouldn't take so long to get things done.

Go ahead, Dick.

MR. RICHARD YANCEY: Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission, a few minutes ago when you were talking about bag limits on raccoons, I couldn't help but notice that animal up in the



fork of that tree, right over your left shoulder, and that artist put a very apprehensive look on the face of that raccoon while you were talking about bag limits!

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: Did he go around that tree there?

(Laughter)

MR. YANCEY: Well, he hid momentarily when you were talking about bag limits of four and five, I believe!

The first item I have on the agenda relates to the proposed establishment of the Atchafalaya Delta Wildlife Management Area.

This area is located due south of Morgan City, immediately off the mouth of the Atchafalaya River and the mouth of the Wax Lake cutoff, and Joe Herring is holding up a map here that delineates the boundary of the proposed area. This black line that follows the shoreline of the marsh would be the north boundary of the area, and the black line follows along the northwestern edge of Pointe au Fer Island, out across the Gulf, and then back up to the marsh over at this point here



(indicating). It encloses approximately 125,000 acres.

Now the cross-hatched land located immediately off the mouth of the Atchafalaya River and the mouth of the Wax Lake cutoff shows the new marshes and mud flats that have formed in the Atchafalaya Bay area. Presently there are about 10,000 or 11,000 acres of marshes and mud flats that have formed out there as a result of sedimentation out of the Atchafalaya River and down through the Wax Lake cutoff.

Now the geologists that are carefully watching this area tell us that in just a few years this marshland area is going to extend itself on out to the western edge of Pointe au Fer Island. It is going to be a very, very extensive delta marsh and certainly, as we all know, these delta marshes throughout the world are some of the most productive wildlife habitats that you can find anywhere.

Last winter some aerial inventories were made of this marsh area were made of this marsh area in here and some 85,000 ducks, mostly



puddle ducks, were found using those marshes. As this delta grows and expands, it is ultimately going to become one of the finest wintering areas for migratory waterfowl on the continent.

With this in mind, this is all state lands and waters, and with this in mind it was thought that it would be timely that a wildlife management area be established in this region of the state which would serve the public primarily in south central Louisiana. Looking down the road ahead, we know that this is going to become a tremendously valuable area from the standpoint of wildlife, and if a game management area is established, then it will mean that proper management will be afforded to the area by personnel of the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission under rules and regulations adopted by the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission.

We think it is a good project and we think it offers south central Louisiana an opportunity to have an excellent game management area.

Now the legislature has just passed a bill in the current session that just ended last



night which will authorize the establishment of this area. The bills were heard in the House Natural Resources and the Senate Natural Resources Committees. There were some concerns expressed relating to flood control, navigation and minerals. Consequently, the bill was amended to provide that the only controls that the Commission would exercise out there would relate to fish and wildlife, and we would have no jurisdiction over any of these other matters. Of course, flood control and navigation are handled by the Corps of Engineers and minerals are leased out by the State Mineral Board under the Department of Natural Resources.

THE CHAIRMAN: Dick, you might add for the clarification of the people here, particularly those concerned about going back and forth through that area, that they will have the right of ingress and egress. They can take their weapons in the boat going back and forth to hunting camps beyond there and so forth.

MR. YANCEY: Right. We have about 35 wildlife management areas in Louisiana now that



occupy about a million acres of lands and waters. They are scattered throughout the state and all the public hunting, public fishing, all of this, and ingress and egress are regulated by the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission. Of course, things like trapping are encouraged on these wildlife management areas. If we don't control the populations of animals such as nutria and muskrat through trapping, then certainly they can prove damaging to your marshes, but trapping, commercial fishing, sport hunting, sport fishing are all encouraged on these wildlife management areas.

We have areas like Pass a Loutre which is similar to this, where ingress and egress of hunters going to adjoining areas is not restricted by any regulations of the Commission.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do I understand, Mr. Yancey, from what you said yesterday that there will be probably at least two agents assigned to this area to patrol it at all times?

MR. YANCEY: An area of this type is going to require at least two or more fulltime employees of the Commission to manage those marshes



and look after the fish and wildlife resources out there.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, I have studied this situation since it does sit in our back door. I think as an honest hunter, an honest sportsman, it would be an asset to the area because we would have two or three more game wardens out there at all times to help patrol and police that area, and I don't think they would do anything except help us in that regard. I don't see where it be any detriment to people in this area who are honest to have that made a wildlife management area.

MR. YANCEY: We have some people here that want to be heard and, of course, as you said, Mr. Berry, we have had this game management area program under way in Louisiana since 1950. It has been an extremely popular program. It has helped protect fish and wildlife resources in many areas of the state. It has provided the public with a place to hunt and fish and trap and enjoy these wildlife resources, and we think it is a good project for this part of the state. Mr. Berry specifically wanted to discuss this matter here in



Morgan City before any final action was taken to see if there were any recommendations or opposition or support for the proposal.

There are some people here that want to be heard, I think.

THE CHAIRMAN: Dick, the only objection I can think of that might affect those who might have camps on public grounds out there now might lose their camps. Is that correct? If somebody has built a hunting camp out there --

MR. YANCEY: Well, normally on the Commission's game management areas, camping is allowed on designated areas. We do not allow the construction of private camps for obvious reasons. If you allow one private camp on a given area, you have got to give everyone the same right, and this would mean that ultimately the area would be totally occupied by large numbers of private camps, which would then defeat the purpose for which the area is being established, which is to allow the general public a place to come enjoy the outdoors in an area that is in a natural state and not occupied by a large number of buildings and large



numbers of other private facilities on state land. It would give everyone the same right.

However, camping is allowed on these game management areas. Usually designated areas are selected where overnight camping is permitted.

MR. DUPUY: In the area that is outlined, it is all water now except for the little bit built up on both sides of the channel. There isn't any camping problem presently existing, is there?

MR. YANCEY: I think there are either two or three private camps out on the area now. These are camps that have been built on leases that have been issued by the State Land Office.

MR. DUPUY: Are there predictions by geologists that by 1990 nearly all of the area that is outlined and suggested for management area will be land mass above sea level?

MR. YANCEY: That's right. This delta here has formed rapidly and in just a few years it is going to be much larger than it is now and there is going to be tens of thousands of acres out in the Atchafalaya Bay area of delta marshes. You now have ten and in just a few years there



will be --

MR. DUPUY: Sedimentation from the river at the higher stages keeps ahead of subsidence and compaction of sediment?

MR. YANCEY: That's right.

MR. DUPUY: So you are actually building rather than being subdued.

MR. YANCEY: Yes, sedimentation rates are exceeding subsidence and erosion rates out there and consequently the marshes are increasing in size.

MR. DUPUY: This would be 45,000 acres you say that would not be purchased, we wouldn't have to buy any?

MR. YANCEY: No, this is all state lands and waters now. There would be no money involved in the acquisition of any lands in that area.

MR. DUPUY: How many acres? I don't think I stated that correctly.

MR. YANCEY: A total of 125,000 acres inside the dotted line area.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Yancey, I don't necessarily agree with the forecast on the filling in



of this particular area out there as whoever prepared these documents suggested would happen. We all know that we have a westerly flow of the currents at the mouth of the river and most of the mud that came down the Mississippi in the '73 flood as shown by satellite photos was deposited to the west, which would actually be on the western side of this area we are talking about here, but to the east side of Atchafalaya Bay and back in toward Four League Bay, I don't there will be the siltation there by 1990 that the artist or whoever sketched this thing essentially had in his mind.

MR. YANCEY: Well, the siltation of that area is going to depend a lot upon the disposal of spoil in the existing navigational canal, and presently this spoil has been deposited primarily to the west, which then means that most of the silt goes out to the east, even though you do have a westerly flow, as you pointed out, generally speaking in that area.

MR. LAPEYRE: Would you explain for my benefit and anybody else who didn't clearly understand what the effect of the action of the legis-



lature in this matter was.

MR. YANCEY: Well, the legislation that was passed in the session just ended last night authorizes the Department of Natural Resources to lease to the Department of Wild Life and Fisheries Commission this state land area of 125,000 acres for the purpose of establishing a wildlife management area, specifically excluding the minerals and navigation and this sort of thing.

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: Dick, would you go just a little bit further and explain to the Commission, and I think they may even have that explanation before them now, that at the time that the Governor will proclaim this area as a game management area then rules and regulations for the proper management of it will then be adopted by the Commission.

MR. YANCEY: Right. Once the area is proclaimed by the Governor as a wildlife management area, then it will be up to the Commission to adopt the rules and regulations under which hunting and fishing and trapping and this sort of thing is allowed out there.



THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kyle, I see you standing back there again. You are a former Commission member and former Chairman. Would you like to come up and make any comments on what you think about this proposal?

MR. J. E. KYLE, JR.: If you have got Paragraph V in there, I am in favor of it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Paragraph V, is that mineral and flood control, Mr. Kyle?

MR. KYLE: Flood control and navigation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Flood control and navigation. Mr. Kyle, would you come forward please and make your statement where we can hear you.

MR. KYLE: It is a pleasure to have so many people that have to listen to me! (Laughter)

Mr. Chairman, this bill should have been passed, with what is happening out there in the delta, building up, to protect it. The State Land Office had leased a couple of places for camps and they have been entirely uncontrolled. The Port Commission looked at it. The only thing we were particularly concerned about was the control line has come up here six feet in Morgan City and we



would not be stopped on any dredging we had to do to protect Morgan City against flooding.

THE CHAIRMAN: So you would recommend the wildlife management area?

MR. KYLE: Yes, sir. If not, it is going to be a mess and the Commission is going to have untold criticism and everything else and nobody is going to get to use it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Kyle.

MR. KYLE: Thank you for letting me talk, and you, too, Mr. Jones.

THE CHAIRMAN: I don't remember whether Mr. Kyle and Mr. Jones were friends or adversaries on the Commission years ago, but we will find out later.

Yes, sir, you want to be heard back there? Would you come forward, please, and state your name and who you represent.

MR. KENNETH R. TUMINELLO: My name is Ken Tuminello. I represent five sport hunters, duck hunters.

To start out rather bluntly, I am the person that owns the only camp out there on this



new spoil deposit. As Mr. Yancey has said, this land is already state land. Anyone in here can use that land as it presently stands. I think my basic philosophy in regards to wildlife management would have to be that the acquisition of land has to be foremost for wildlife; without the land base you have no wildlife. Therefore, I am not opposed to the Commission taking the land within its jurisdiction and managing it for wildlife and fisheries resources.

However, I question if it is absolutely necessary, at least presently, to do so. So you can see I am here for a personal reason. I have a camp and I would like to protect it. As I understand it, unless we make some special considerations in this case, I will lose my camp down there. As Mr. Yancey also said and I fully agree, it is probably the hottest, the best waterfowl hunting if not in the United States for sure in Louisiana that is open to the public, and that is an important consideration. As it stands, it is open to the public.

Now my major concern is that if it does



come under management, I am not against it, but I would like to say at least -- I understand management regulations will be developed after the area is formally accepted, but my own personal point in regards to the camp lease, I feel confident that we can take the word of the geologists that this area is growing and is going to expand and that emergence is far ahead of subsidence, that is, the delta is rapidly building. If you don't believe, you can look at aerial mosaics from 1973 to 1977, and the land is building at a phenomenal rate, faster than most any other region in the country. This is new land being built every year. It is growing.

I have here a map of the exposed area, a mosaic. I wish I had a 1976 map. It would be about 20 to 30 percent less than this. We are talking about the growth rate of one to two square miles a year at the minimum.

Now this is my proposal, request, suggestion, whatever you want to call it. I am here to try to keep my camp as long as I can. It is a primitive camp. It has no electricity, no running



water, and that's the way we like it. All it is is a glorified tent. It has got a roof, a floor, four walls on it. We make no other impact on the area. We carry out our garbage. Whatever we bring in we take out. We keep the place clean and we take a hell of a lot of pride in it. We love the little camp.

We went through the procedures legally. I have a lease here that says I have the right to put a campsite there. We planned. We did everything according to the rules.

Now, let me re-emphasize I am not against the wildlife management area but I would like to suggest or propose or at least plant a seed for a new concept here. This area is remote. To get to this point, the mouth of the river, you are talking about at minimum a 15-mile boat ride down the Atchafalaya River. I don't think anyone would recommend that for the average hunter in Louisiana. First of all, you have to have special equipment, which means a large boat.

Actually, what I feel like you are doing if you start putting a lot of restrictions and



regulations that have been common on other management areas -- I am not saying they will be on this one but on other management areas -- you will actually reduce the public utility. You will reduce the use that the public will actually be able to make use of. I have camped down there in a tent several times. It is a very unpleasant situation. O. K., you can pull out and say, well, that's too bad, you know.

I would like to propose that we make special consideration to designate, regulate and restrict primitive campsites that are nothing more than glorified tents that would be zoned, the land would be zoned accordingly for campsites only. There would be enough limits. You said there would be camps everywhere throughout the area. Heck, we restrict a lot of other things to certain things. Not anyone can get a trapping lease on a management area because the area has a quota. Not anyone can get an oyster bed lease because there is only so much water bottoms. We restrict these activities. Why restrict sportsmen? We are down here for really one reason -- fishing and hunting.



MR. WILLE: Excuse me.

MR. TUMINELLO: Yes, sir.

MR. WILLE: I didn't mean to interrupt you but I was going to ask you, how long is your lease for?

MR. TUMINELLO: Three years.

MR. WILLE: Three years. When was it in effect?

MR. TUMINELLO: It was effective October 15, 1976.

MR. WILLE: O. K.

MR. TUMINELLO: And it will expire October 15, 1979.

MR. WILLE: And you are the only one that is out there?

MR. TUMINELLO: I have the only camp. There was one attempt made that apparently failed and I understand there are three valid leases that have been issued by the State Land Office but we are the only one that acted on our lease to construct a campsite. I know the area well. I take a lot of pride in it. I love it. I did a little research, if you might call it that, on my own out



there on some of the plant succession taking place on the new land and I have loaned it to various people for scientific studies down there. They have utilized the camp and found it quite comfortable, primitive as it is. I don't think it will detract if we restrict the area and the regulation of the building on this area. That is my suggestion and request and plea and everything else you want to call it.

MR. LAPEYRE: Is your lease restricted to the campsite itself or do you have additional acreage for hunting?

MR. TUMINELLO: I have a one-acre-more-or-less lease. It is just simply a campsite lease. It has stipulations, restrictions, and everything else.

MR. WILLE: Are all the leases under that same provision?

MR. TUMINELLO: Pardon?

MR. WILLE: All the leases that were issued were issued under those provisions, one acre more or less?

MR. TUMINELLO: To the best of my under-



standing. You know, I am not against the Commission, that is not it at all. I am just trying to defend my little camp.

(Laughter)

THE CHAIRMAN: We noticed that right off! (Laughter) I really think, Ken, that perhaps your camp would be allowed to be left there if we do make this a wildlife management area, to the end of your lease, anyhow, and as Mr. Yancey said, we are fairly reasonable people and no doubt we will have some areas designated for camping areas and it might be a little bit better than what you have got now.

MR. TUMINELLO: All I can say is I would appreciate that consideration a great deal. I don't know how many people -- could I have a show of hands of anybody who has tented out there for more than one or two nights? That's what I thought. It's not a pleasant experience. I like wilderness as much as anybody else and that may be a wilderness in some people's view. I don't think there are many people who have even been out there to experience the area. It is a real treat if you do



go, but --

THE CHAIRMAN: A lot of us have been out there. We don't camp out per se but we go out there consistently and I do stay in camps in the area.

MR. TUMINELLO: As far as my campsite detracting from the area, heck, we are 1,000 feet from Armada-Hess pumping station, we are less than 2,000 feet from two more wellheads, we are built on an artificially deposited spoil. Let's face it, if we are going to talk about damaging the facial value of the areas as a wild land, we haven't been the first ones. The Corps periodically dredges. Man's influence is already there, way before we were, and if could just restrict, regulate the type of camp or structure, and let's keep power lines out of the area, let's keep running water out, let's just make it at least minimum, you know, food, shelter and clothing, and something more than a tent is what we are asking.

THE CHAIRMAN: I guess I am just narrow-minded, but I don't see a damned thing wrong with running water! (Laughter) I enjoy a good hot bath



every once in a while!

MR. TUMINELLO: I am glad that you people would hear me out.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ken, we appreciate your comments and we are sympathetic to your views, but I don't think we can forego this wildlife management area to let one man keep his camp out there. We are just trying to make it so you can come out there and enjoy it.

MR. TUMINELLO: I am not asking to restrict the area. I am just asking for a possible zoning which to me is not too far --

THE CHAIRMAN: We will certainly study it and take it into consideration. Thank you very much, sir.

MR. TUMINELLO: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: I believe Mr. Henry Bernard, President of the Louisiana Wildlife Federation, wanted to be heard here a minute ago.

MR. HENRY BERNARD: Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission, Mr. Yancey, I appreciate the opportunity to address you on this question.

Of course, the Louisiana Wildlife



Federation has endorsed the concept of the game management area in this particular area, as we spoke to you some two months ago in New Orleans when the plan was originally in the formulative stages and before the authorization of the legislation had even been obtained.

Besides that, I also not only appear as President of the Louisiana Wildlife Federation and bring you their position but from a personal standpoint also. Having been born and raised in this area, a resident of New Iberia, and also happening to have particularly a couple of sections of land under lease just at Lake Hackberry down around the jaws below the south side of the Intracoastal, I am very familiar with this particular area and I am very familiar with the area in general.

Of course, it is a fine potential wildlife management area. One of the fine things we have as a potential is the fact, and I am sure you gentlemen know as I do, in this part of the country, southwest Louisiana, if you want to duck hunt, if you don't have a lease with Williams Corporation or Miami Corporation or a private lease on marsh-



lands, the duck hunting opportunities are rather remote. This is a fine potential to establish a very large game management area or wildlife management area for the state. Also, for the people in the audience, I know I don't have to relate the point to you gentlemen, but there is a difference between a refuge and a wildlife management area. We are not talking about a refuge. We are talking about an opportunity for all of the citizens in this area to be able to participate. It won't be this year or next year that they will be able to participate in all of the various forms of activities that we have on our wildlife management areas, but this will be potentially one of the finest wildlife management areas I think we have in the state. It would be a fine acquisition and would be a credit to the program.

We in the Louisiana Wildlife Federation are concerned about any possible erosion of the Secretary's and the Commission's authority and responsibilities and supervision of wildlife management areas, but we still totally support the program and hope that you add this very fine area.



Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Henry. We are glad to have you with us this morning. Does anyone else wish to be heard?

(No response)

Gentlemen, you have the recommendation of Mr. Yancey. Do we have a motion?

MR. YANCEY: What I would recommend is that you authorize Mr. Angelle to take the necessary steps in signing leases and formulating the Governor's proclamation to have this area established as a wildlife management area. This would take several weeks to have this done.

MR. WILLE: I would like to recommend this and I would also like to recommend, Dick, that we honor the leases that have already been issued by the State Land Office for the term of the lease and then at that time either the Commission or the Director under empowerment from us can act as he sees fit on the thing.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have a motion from Mr. Wille. Do we have a second?

MR. DUPUY: Second.



THE CHAIRMAN: Seconded by Mr. Dupuy.

All in favor say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?

(No response)

Hearing none, so ordered.

Dick, how many acres is this?

MR. YANCEY: It will be a total of 125,000 acres with about 10,000 or 11,000 acres of marshlands out there now and, of course, as these marshlands grow and build, eventually we will probably have 40,000, 50,000, 60,000 acres of marshlands. And in addition to waterfowl, of course, we are going to have and already have fur-bearing animals on the area and eventually deer are going to be out on those pass banks there.

THE CHAIRMAN: Burt, how many acres do we have in wildlife management areas in Louisiana now?

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: Mr. Berry, when the Governor proclaims this particular area and we complete our land acquisition up in north Louisiana within the next eight or ten days, which is a



20,000-acre bottomland hardwood tract, we will have approximately 200,000 acres in game management areas in Louisiana owned by the Commission. We have more than that. However, a lot of it is privately owned and is loaned to us for those purposes. The Commission will own, either through state lands or through the acquisition of these lands, about 400,000 acres.

In putting a few figures together here, as Dick mentioned a minute ago, the land acquisition program started in the late Fifties. Up through 1972 we had acquired approximately 200,000 acres in about a 22-year period. I guess I say this in bragging because we have always had the support of Governor Edwards, but in the last five years, this will add another 200,000 acres to the game management program, which is a great tribute to our great Governor, because he is quite a hunter, a fisherman, and supports our program totally.

Sometime in the future the sportsmen of the State of Louisiana should really tell the Governor, yes, we do appreciate you because you have supported our program, and this is just a



great tribute to him.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Angelle.

FROM THE FLOOR: I just wanted to ask about trapping, possible trapping regulations on this area.

MR. YANCEY: That will be established later but trapping will be encouraged on the area to control the numbers of nutria and muskrat and animals of that type.

FROM THE FLOOR: And at some later time the Commission will consider a set of rules and regulations pertinent to this area?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, sir, that is correct.

MR. YANCEY: And at the time those are adopted, any rules and regulations the Commission adopts are in public meetings of this type and the Commission meets once monthly. The items on the agenda are published in news releases so if anyone wants to make any comments or recommendations on what those rules and regulations should be, these Commission meetings are always open. They are held in public and everyone is invited to be present and offer their recommendations.



(The full text of the
resolution is here made
a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, the Wild Life and
Fisheries Commission has for several
months considered the establishment
of a major wildlife management area
in Atchafalaya Bay south of Morgan
City, and

WHEREAS, a major delta marsh-
land is in the process of forming in
the Bay as a result of sedimentation
from the Atchafalaya River, and

WHEREAS, the new delta marsh
will become one of the most important
wildlife areas along the Gulf Coast, and

WHEREAS, tens of thousands of
ducks and geese and large numbers and
other forms of wildlife are already
utilizing the 10,000 acres of marshes
and mud flats that have formed in the
Bay, and

WHEREAS, the delta is increasing



in size at a rate of 600 or 700 acres per year and is expected to extend outward to Pointe au Fer Island by the end of this century, and

WHEREAS, the establishment of a wildlife management area would afford protection for the wildlife resources and habitat in the Bay area while at the same time providing the people of Louisiana with a public area where hunting, fishing and other forms of outdoor recreation can be enjoyed, and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana legislature during the regular 1977 session enacted a statute providing for the establishment of a wildlife management area in this location,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission does hereby authorize and empower the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources to initiate and sign any and all documents necessary



to the establishment of the 125,000-acre Atchafalaya Delta Wildlife Management Area, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED any outstanding leases that may have been previously issued from lands in this area will be honored.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let's go down to No. 10, Mr. Yancey.

MR. YANCEY: The next item I have on the agenda pertains to the Commission-owned Red River Wildlife Management Area up in Concordia Parish. This area lies along the north bank of Red River and as a result of erosion along that river bank, the Corps of Engineers is setting the levee back some distance on the game management area. Right at the base of this levee there is a power line that is owned by Concordia Electric. There is also a pipeline that is owned by Amoco Pipeline Company, and they have been instructed to move both the power line and the pipeline back in order to make room for the construction of the levee setback.



We would like to recommend that the Commission authorize the Director to issue a permit to both the Amoco Pipeline and Concordia Electric to set these lines and the pipeline back.

THE CHAIRMAN: Dick, excuse me. They have previously paid for rights-of-way?

MR. YANCEY: Amoco paid the Commission \$4,200 for that pipeline right-of-way in 1968 and the Concordia Electric had their power line in place at the time the Commission purchased that property. They will have to do a small amount of clearing in order to put the power line in place.

THE CHAIRMAN: An acre, ten acres, 40 acres?

MR. YANCEY: Well, it will probably be some four or five acres and there will be some timber lost and we would suggest that they be assessed for that timber damage on the game management area in clearing the right-of-way for the land.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we have covered that with the Corps of Engineers, probably.

MR. YANCEY: Yes.



THE CHAIRMAN: Which is our money, in essence.

MR. DUPUY: This is required bank stabilization?

MR. YANCEY: That's right. This is bank stabilization and in order to prevent the levee from caving off in Red River they are setting it back for flood control purposes in Concordia Parish.

MR. DUPUY: I move this recommendation.

MR. WILLE: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have a motion and a second. Mr. Gilbert, would you like to make that motion?

MR. GILBERT: I would like to. It is in my area, Marc, if you don't mind.

MR. DUPUY: That's fine. I second.

THE CHAIRMAN: Motion made by Mr. Gilbert, seconded by Mr. Dupuy. All in favor say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?

(No response)

So ordered.



(The full texts of the
resolutions are hereby
made a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, Concordia Electric
Co-op of Ferriday, Louisiana, has by
letter dated July 7, 1977, requested
permission to relocate its power line
on the Red River Wildlife Management
Area in Concordia Parish, and

WHEREAS, this is necessary
as a result of the U. S. Corps of
Engineers setting its flood control
levee back further from the north
bank of Red River, and

WHEREAS, the power line was
in its existing location at the time
this tract was purchased by the
Commission,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED
that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fish-
eries Commission does hereby grant to
Concordia Electric Co-op of Ferriday
permission to relocate its electric



line on the Red River Wildlife Management Area, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this line be re-established immediately adjacent to the right-of-way to be cleared for the relocation of the levee by the Corps of Engineers as shown on the plat submitted by Concordia Electric, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Concordia Electric will pay a sum for timber damage as determined by the Commission's forester and that other stipulations be placed in the permit letter that will minimize clearing of timber for the power line installation and will minimize any other damages that may be incurred on the wildlife management area.

WHEREAS, Amoco Pipeline Company, Fort Worth, Texas, has by its letter dated July 11, 1977,



requested permission to relocate its pipeline on the Commission-owned Red River Wildlife Management Area in Concordia Parish, and

WHEREAS, it is necessary that this pipeline be moved in order that the U. S. Corps of Engineers may set back its flood control levee bordering the north bank of Red River, and

WHEREAS, Amoco had previously paid the Commission for this pipeline right-of-way,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission does hereby grant Amoco Pipeline Company of Forth Worth, Texas, permission to relocate its pipeline immediately adjacent to the power line to be constructed by Concordia Electric Co-op, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that stipulations be placed in the permit to Amoco that will properly protect



the wildlife management area from any damages.

MR. YANCEY: The next item that we have is to set the hunting season dates on several migratory game birds that are important to hunters in Louisiana.

The U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service establishes the shooting hours and the bag limits and the number of hunting days under which we hunt dove, snipe, rails, gallinules, woodcock and blue-winged teal and green-winged teal. The Fish & Wildlife Service has forwarded to us the number of hunting days that we are allowed on each of these species, the shooting hours and the bag limits. It will be up to the Commission at this point to establish the specific dates for the opening and closing of these seasons.

I am going to call on Larry Soileau to provide the Commission with the specific dates for the hunting of each one of these game birds but before he comes up I would like to say that these dates that you are about to set are somewhat tentative inasmuch as the Fish & Wildlife Service is



required to run these regulations in the Federal Register for a period of about 30 days and while to my knowledge they have never made any changes in the regulations, they are subject to change, so for the benefit of the press, these dates we are about to set are somewhat tentative and they are subject to change.

I would like to point out that some of the anti-hunting organizations in the country at this time are threatening a lawsuit to stop September dove hunting throughout the country. This could possibly result in a change. Hopefully it won't because September dove hunting is absolutely essential in parts of Louisiana where these birds are raised and they move out early in the fall and are available only to hunt during the September period. About 37 percent of the kill of doves in Louisiana takes place during the September season.

The only major change that is being recommended pertains to the hunting of rails in Louisiana and it is proposed that the rail season be advanced substantially from what it has been in the past. For the past two or three years we have



started the rail season with the duck season and we have gotten a number of requests from people who live here in the coastal regions of Louisiana to start that rail season with the teal season or around the first of October. They have got dogs and they want to go in the marshes and hunt these birds, so there will be a major change proposed with regard to the hunting of rails during the upcoming season.

But, as a whole, we are very well satisfied with the number of days and the bag limits that we have been allowed by the Fish & Wildlife Service and we think they are very appropriate. We think they are going to provide a lot of fine hunting opportunity for the sportsmen in Louisiana. We are again being allowed this nine-day September teal hunting season. It means a great deal to the duck hunters, particularly in the southern parts of the state.

With that, I would like to call on Larry Soileau, Mr. Chairman, and let him give the specific recommendations on date to the Commission. He can also give you some background information



on the kill of doves in the state during the past season, which emphasizes the importance of that game bird to the sport-hunting public in Louisiana.

THE CHAIRMAN: At this time I am going to call a five-minute recess. We are about out of tape and we don't have time to finish this, so I am going to call a recess for five minutes.

(Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Soileau, would you proceed, please, sir.

MR. LARRY SOILEAU: Mr. Chairman, before I give you the recommendations for the hunting season this coming year, I would like to briefly report the results of the dove harvest during last year. We made estimates of the dove kill in the last year by sending mail questionnaires to people who had purchased resident hunting licenses, and we sampled about 10,000 of them.

The results of this survey show that during the past hunting season, that is the '76-'77 hunting season, we had an exceptionally good season. We harvested approximately 40 percent more doves than we did the year before. I have



a map here which indicates the time period when the doves were harvested and the geographic areas.

As we have during the past several years we have had a three-way split season in the north zone. That zone line was changed last year, and it is now I-10 from the Texas State line to Baton Rouge and I-12 from Baton Rouge to Slidell, and then I-10 from Slidell to the Mississippi State line.

As you can see, as Mr. Yancey pointed out, in the September season we harvest approximately 30 percent of our doves. This is a 16-day season. In the north zone, the middle segment is 30 days long and in the north zone the final segment is 24 days long. The highest harvest in the northeastern part of the state occurs in that first segment, 245,000 doves. The highest harvest overall is in our Region 3, about 450,000 doves. The overall harvest is 1.6 million. Last year it was 1.1 million. The September segment, the harvest is 37 percent; the middle segment, 44 percent; and the final segment, 19 percent.

The north zone, which is the larger part



of the state, harvests approximately a million doves, about a half a million in the south zone.

This year we are going to recommend to you the same season that we had roughly last year, except adjust it for Saturdays, for weekends, which will move the season dates up by one day.

For mourning doves, the framework for the north zone is September 1 through January 15, and we are recommending opening the season in the north zone, a three-way split again this year, with the season opening on Saturday, September 3, and continuing through Sunday, September 18; the second segment in the north zone, opening Saturday, October 15, continuing through Sunday, November 13, for a period of 30 days; and the final segment, being 24 days long, opening December 17 and ending on January 9. The bag limit is 12, possession limit 24. Shooting hours from noon to sunset.

In the south zone, the framework is September 20 to January 15. We are recommending a two-way split, the same as we had last year, opening October 15, which is a Saturday, continuing through Sunday, November 27, and the second



segment is 26 days long, the first segment being 44 days long, and the second segment opening on December 17, which is a Saturday, and closing on January 11, for a total of 70 days.

For rails, the framework is September 1 through January 20. We are recommending that the season open September 17, which is a Saturday, and continuing for 70 straight days through November 25. The bag limit for rail on King and Clapper is 15 bag limit, 30 in possession, and the Sora and Virginia in the aggregate is 25.

Woodcock, the framework September 1 through February 28. We are recommending that the season be opened on Saturday, December 3, and continuing through February 5 for 65 straight days, with a bag limit of 5, possession limit of 10.

For snipe the framework is September 1 through February 28. We are recommending that the season open Saturday, November 5, and continuing through February 19, for a total of 107 days. The bag limit is 8 and possession limit 16.

Gallinules, the framework is September 1 through January 20. We are recommending that the



season open on Saturday, September 17 and continuing through November 25 for 70 straight days. Bag limit 15, possession limit 30.

The special September teal season, the framework is September 1 through September 30. We are recommending that the season be opened on Saturday, September 17 and close on Sunday, September 25 for nine straight days. Bag limit 4, possession limit 8. Shooting hours for the teal season are sunrise to sunset. For doves, as I said before, from 12 noon until sunset and for rail, woodcock, snipe and gallinule, it is one-half before sunrise to sunset.

Those are my recommendations.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, you have heard the recommendations. Does anybody have any comment on them?

MR. DUPUY: You can start shooting gallinule a half-hour before teal?

MR. SOILEAU: That is correct.

MR. DUPUY: Will that be a problem?

MR. SOILEAU: Not that I am aware of.

THE CHAIRMAN: It will just scare the



hell out of the teal!

MR. DUPUY: I will so move, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Moved by Mr. Dupuy. Do I have a second?

MR. LAPEYRE: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: Seconded by Mr. Lapeyre. All in favor say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?

(No response)

So ordered.

(The full text of the resolution is here made a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has announced the regulations for the taking of several species of migratory game birds, and

WHEREAS, it is necessary that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission adopt dates for the hunting of these species,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED



that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission does hereby adopt the following hunting season dates, bag and possession limits and shooting hours for the taking of these migratory game birds during the 1977-78 hunting seasons:

	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Days</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Poss. Limit</u>	<u>Shooting Hours</u>
Doves (North Zone)	Sept. 3- Sept. 18	16	12	24	12 Noon to Sunset
	Oct. 15- Nov. 13	30			
	Dec. 17- Jan. 9	$\frac{24}{70}$			
Doves (South Zone)	Oct. 15- Nov. 27	44	12	24	"
	Dec. 17- Jan. 11	$\frac{26}{70}$			
Rails	Sept. 17- Nov. 25	70	(Clapper & King) 15 (Sora & Virginia) 25	30 25	1/2 Hour before Sunrise to Sunset
Woodcock	Dec. 3- Feb. 5	65	5	10	"
Snipe	Nov. 5- Feb. 19	107	8	16	"

(continued)



	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Days</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Poss. Limit</u>	<u>Shooting Hours</u>
Gallinules	Sept. 17- Nov. 25	70	15	30	1/2 hour before Sunrise to Sunset
Teal	Sept. 17- Sept. 25	9	4	8	Sunrise to Sunset

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all other regulations established by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service are also hereby placed into effect as related to baiting, types of firearms, bag and possession regulations, etc.

THE CHAIRMAN: Item No. 12, Mr. Herring.

MR. JOE HERRING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In setting the seasons last month in some of our Wildlife Management Areas and other places in the state, on our Jackson-Bienville Area we had a bucks only season, November 25-29. As all of us know, we have these check stations we operate and put a season permit on there, and we would like to change to a daily permit because of the information that we have been receiving off this area in some of our deer research.



What this would do, it would make a daily permit for the whole time that Jackson-Bienville is open there so that we could continue collecting this data that we have on this area, as far as deer management goes.

I would recommend then that we make that change from season permit to daily permit on the Jackson-Bienville Wildlife Management Area.

Then one was more or less left out in our land description there as far as the doe season in part of Beauregard Parish. That was in the Longville-Dry Creek area right in here. We left out that description in there for a two-day doe season, which would be November 5 and December 17. This area that we do have is all still hunt so it would be during their still hunt there, opening each one the same as we have in other parts of the state where we have still hunts and doe hunts, those two days, so I recommend we make that change there.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you need a motion on that?

MR. HERRING: It would be better, I think, to go ahead and make it as part of the



record there.

MR. GILBERT: I so move.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gilbert makes the motion. Do I have a second?

MR. JONES: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: Seconded by Mr. Jones. All in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?

(No response)

So ordered.

(The full texts of the resolutions are here made a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, when setting the 1977-78 hunting seasons last month we had for Jackson-Bienville Wildlife Management Area a season permit required for the first five days of the bucks only season, and

WHEREAS, the Department of Wild Life and Fisheries has been collecting valuable deer management



data for the past several years by having daily permits, and

WHEREAS, daily permits for the period of November 25-29, 1977, will assist the Department in continuing to collect this data,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that daily permit will be required for deer hunting on the Jackson-Bienville Wildlife Management Area for the periods November 25-29, December 17-23 and December 31-January 1, 1978.

WHEREAS, when setting the 1977-78 hunting seasons a description was omitted for a doe season in Beauregard Parish, and

WHEREAS, this area is described as that portion of Beauregard Parish bounded on the west by U. S. Highway 190 and 171, on the south by the gravel pit road from Longville to Dry Creek and on the north and east by Louisiana



Highway 394, and

WHEREAS, this described area is in Area 5 and is to have a doe season on November 5 and December 17, 1977,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the above-described area have a doe season November 5 and December 17, 1977, in the above-described area of Beauregard Parish, Louisiana.

MR. HERRING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Joe.

Under other business, I want to report to you our mineral prices on Rockefeller Refuge. Mr. Jones, do you want to handle that?

MR. JONES: The background is that in the 1950's mineral operations started on Rockefeller Refuge and the Mineral Board, on behalf of the Commission, entered into a number of oil, gas and mineral leases on Rockefeller and there has been a lot of production since then. It is my understanding that our monthly production is between \$200,000 and \$400,000 a month.

A lot of the old leases contain the



provision that says settlement is to be made by the producer with the state based upon the market value of the gas at the well. Well, just a run-down on what we are getting now, we have five leases on Rockefeller. Pennzoil is paying us \$1.73 per thousand. On one lease Amoco pays us 53 cents, on another lease they pay us 54.6 cents, on another lease, they pay us 73 cents. Superior has two prices on one lease; on one we get 37 cents and one we get 60 cents.

The going price for gas in that area is a minimum of \$1.40 that is being paid. Two years ago we met with the Mineral Board when the prices of gas began to escalate and asked the Mineral Board to do something about it, where we are paid in our settlement based upon current market prices of gas.

Again, we met with the Mineral Board, the Wild Life and Fisheries liaison committee, in the first week of June. At that time we brought the matter to their attention and asked that something be done. It involves substantial revenues for us. I don't know exactly how much, simply



because I don't have the figures on the respective production at each price, but you can see from the prices that I have given you, from a top of \$1.73 to a low of 37 cents for our gas that is apparently going up north somewhere.

What I am asking is that the producers settle with the state based upon what they agreed in their lease contracts, and that is on the market value. I am not asking that the producers pay something they are not called upon to pay by the terms of the lease.

I would like to move that this Commission ask the Attorney General and ask the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources to take whatever action is necessary to insure that we get the current market value for the gas that is presently being sold and that we be paid back pay for that period of time when the market value was in excess of what we were paid.

MR. WILLE: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have a motion by Mr. Jones and a second by Mr. Wille. Is there any discussion?



MR. LAPEYRE: Does this apply to any area other than Rockefeller?

MR. JONES: Well, of course, we have one other area. Allan, what is the other area that we have?

MR. ENSMINGER: Marsh Island, of course, we have gas production on Marsh Island also.

MR. JONES: I would want to make it applicable to all the properties over which we have some control that the Mineral Board administers the minerals for us. Incidentally, a couple of years ago the Mineral Board revised their lease form where we don't have that problem on the new leases because they provide a manner in which you calculate the market value and as a result of that we are getting the high prices. But I am quite sure that it involves considerable sums of money when you look at receiving 37 cents as compared to \$1.73. This is money that is dedicated, that we use in our operation of the Refuge.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does anyone else wish to be heard or to make a statement at this time? If not, I will call for a vote. All in favor say



aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?

(No response)

So ordered.

The next meeting will be held in New Orleans on August 29 and 30, which I think is the fifth week in August. It is almost mandated that we hold it at that particular time for setting the duck season. We get our framework from the bureaucrats in Washington shortly before that and have a short time in which to work within this framework and set the duck season.

Does anyone else wish to be heard this morning? Mr. DePriest.

MR. DENIS DePRIEST: Yes, sir. There are two things I would like to ask about, being a country boy and not knowing about all these things.

THE CHAIRMAN: I don't believe all that!

MR. DePRIEST: Being a night hunter and I spend all of my hunting time at night, I have been seeing a lot of predators that I haven't seen in years past, mainly fox and coyote, in our area



here, and I have talked to several landowners about this problem that we are having now. It is depleting the rabbit population, the quail population, and every year it seems like I see more and more of these things at night. I would like to bring this to your attention so that somebody might look into it and see if there is anything that we can do about it.

Also, I would like to mention that in our immediate area along the west bank of the Atchafalaya Basin, the Corps of Engineers is building up that levee along there and it goes on up 20 or 30 miles on up the river. Well, unlike most areas of the state, we don't have a place where a family can go and fish off the bank. If you don't have a bass boat or something like that in this area, you just don't go fishing.

It seems like this is a wonderful opportunity for the state to cultivate an area where bank fishing could be done. I would just like to see someone look into it, have some biologists go out there and check it out and see what the Corps of Engineers has done so far. The area that they



have completed, the width of that bar ditch is maybe 150 to 200 feet wide. Now how deep it is I don't know, but they have an awful big levee, so evidently they have pulled a lot of dirt out of there. I do remember at one time before they started on this work that there was an opening up above Charenton and it was outletted into Bayou Teche down near Verdunville, so upon completion of this levee work, if some provision could be made to let fresh water in through that bar ditch, as per Wild Life and Fisheries biologists' recommendations, to keep that water alive and maybe have some weed control, lily control in that area, it would provide a whole lot of new water to be fished by the area residents.

Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

Does anybody else wish to be heard this morning?

(No response)

Again, on my own behalf and the Commission's behalf, I want to thank the people of Morgan City and Berwick and this area for the



turnout we have had here today. That was a good time we had last night. Thank you very much.

MR. JONES: I move we adjourn.

THE CHAIRMAN: We stand adjourned.

(Whereupon, the meeting of the
Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries
Commission in Morgan City,
Louisiana, was adjourned.)

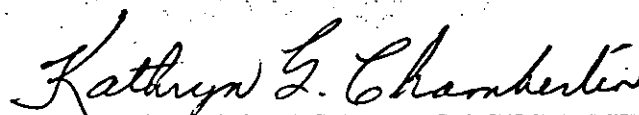
Kathryn G. Chamberlin,
Reporter.



C E R T I F I C A T E

I, the undersigned reporter, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the above and foregoing (127pages of typewritten matter) is a true and correct transcription of the tape recording and of the stenographic notes of the proceedings herein, transcribed by me, at the time and place hereinbefore noted.

New Orleans, Louisiana, this 8th day of August, 1977.



Kathryn G. Chamberlin,
Reporter.

